

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 18, 2023

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chair
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member DeLauro,

We write to you today to reject dangerous cuts to critical public safety programs and propose alternative policies to ensure law enforcement personnel across the country have the tools they need to keep communities safe. The first duty of government is to protect the safety of its citizens. Therefore, Congress has a responsibility to sufficiently fund essential programs that empower law enforcement agencies to address the diverse set of criminal threats facing the communities we represent.

From gun violence to human trafficking to domestic and international terrorism, American law enforcement must contend with a wide array of criminal activity that threatens the well-being of our constituents. It is our duty as members of Congress to make sure these brave public servants have the tools and resources to do their jobs safely and effectively. However, the partisan Republican budget proposal that recently passed the House would cut critical resources, exposing communities across the country to increased levels of crime. The proposal would slash the number of local law enforcement agencies receiving federal support by over 23%, cut the number of federally-funded local law enforcement positions by anywhere from 21% to 27%, decrease FBI personnel by roughly 11,000 people, and freeze hiring at the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. As a result, local communities will lose essential law enforcement personnel, the nation's principal investigative agency will see a decrease in capabilities, and gun violence will become more common in our communities.

As an alternative to the harmful cuts put forward by Republican leadership, we propose a strategy that seeks to build on the targeted public safety investments made in the FY 2023 DOJ appropriation bill. These investments included increases of:

- \$569.6 million to the FBI budget for investigating extremist violence and domestic terrorism.
- \$215.9 million to the ATF for preventing and responding to the gun violence plaguing American communities.
- \$212.1 million to the U.S. Attorneys offices charged with prosecuting federal crimes.

Additionally, the FY 2023 DOJ appropriation provided historic levels of funding to state and local law enforcement agencies. These funds included:

- \$770.8 million for the Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG), the leading source of federal justice funding to state and local jurisdictions. These grants provide local jurisdictions with enhanced resources for enforcement, prosecution, crime prevention, drug treatment, victim and witness initiatives, mental health, and other important public safety initiatives. The proposed cuts would lead to an average decrease of 29% in JAG grants per state, hamstringing local law enforcement agencies across the country.
- \$662.9 million for Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) programs to build trust between police departments and the communities they serve. COPS grants allow local police departments to hire community policing professionals, develop and test innovative policing strategies, and train local government leaders to best support their police officers and protect their communities. The proposed cuts would reduce the number of grant awards in the COPS program by over 23%, hampering the development of safe and productive community-police relationships.
- \$225 million for the Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction (CEBR) to address sexual assault kit and other DNA evidence backlogs. This program helps local governments reduce delays in testing which can lead to

additional criminal activity by serial offenders or incarceration of the innocent. The proposed cuts would reduce the average award for this program by 26%, preventing or delaying the resolution of criminal cases.

Republican leadership's proposed cuts will slash these programs by anywhere from 22% to 30%. The result will be fewer resources for local communities to address the root causes of crime, build trusting relationships with their police forces, and manage DNA evidence crucial to carrying out justice.

The investments in public safety made last Congress were substantial but they are not sufficient and we certainly cannot afford to go backwards. We must build on past successes and continue to increase funding for critical law enforcement initiatives at the federal, state and local levels. If we adopt the dangerous cuts proposed by Republican leadership, the result will be more crime, more victims, and more pain felt by those we represent. We urge you to reject these cuts and provide adequate funding for law enforcement programs so that American families can feel confident their communities are safe.

Sincerely,


Eric Sorensen
Member of Congress


Wiley Nickel
Member of Congress


Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress


Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress

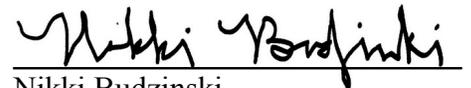

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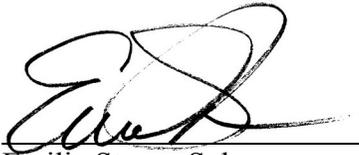

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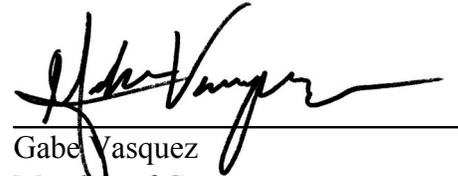
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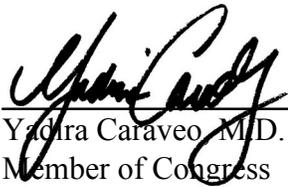
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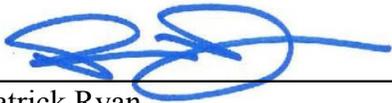
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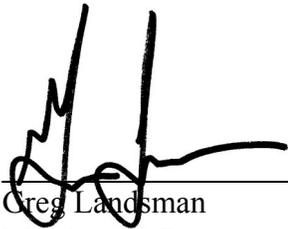
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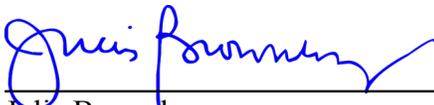
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